

**CALENDAR ITEM
71**

A) Statewide
S)

10/01/02
W 30144
D. Sanders
P. Griggs

**CONSIDER THE ADOPTION OF AN AMENDED
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POLICY**

PARTY:

California State Lands Commission

BACKGROUND:

Environmental Justice is defined under State law as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” At its April 9, 2002, meeting, the Commission adopted an Environmental Justice Policy (Policy) Statement to ensure the integration of such considerations into the staff’s evaluations and the Commission’s actions.

The Commission directed staff to increase public awareness of the Policy and to invite the public and public interest groups to review and comment. Staff was to revise the Policy, as necessary, and bring it back to the Commission for reconsideration.

Staff solicited the public’s review of the Policy by placing it on the Commission’s web site with an open invitation to comment and the means to send staff comments by email via the web site. People were also encouraged to contact staff by telephone or to provide written comments. Staff also researched and identified fifty-one (51) organizations throughout California that included Environmental Justice as a primary interest, goal, or policy of their organization. Each of these organizations received the Policy and background information on the Commission’s responsibilities and programs. In addition, the Policy was circulated to the Commission’s staff to determine, from an operational viewpoint, how the Policy could be improved.

To date, five public interest groups and numerous Commission staff have commented. These comments were considered in the drafting of the amended Policy that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

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In the interim, staff has participated in Environmental Justice training conducted by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). Staff also attended numerous meetings of OPR's Environmental Justice Steering Committee to become more aware of Environmental Justice issues and concerns and to benefit from the experiences of other State agencies that have developed or are developing their own Environmental Justice policies and procedures.

Since the Commission's adoption of the Policy, it has become an integral part of its environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). For example, staff requires environmental consultants bidding on the preparation of environmental documents to include a specific analysis of Environmental Justice in light of the project proposed. These analyses will provide sufficient information for the Commission, during its decision-making process, to clearly understand Environmental Justice issues that are associated with its consideration of specific projects.

The attached Policy responds to Californians who voice concerns that their well being has been overlooked in past deliberations of public agencies because of ethnicity or income level.

EXHIBIT

- A. Amended Environmental Justice Policy Statement

RECOMMENDATIONS

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. ADOPT THE AMENDED ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POLICY STATEMENT ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBIT A.
2. DIRECT STAFF TO DO ALL THAT IS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS POLICY.